

CATCHY LOOSE-LEAF PLAY SERIES

THE WILLIS N. BUGBEE CO., SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Barlow's Borrowing

By MARIE IRISH

CHARACTERS: BARLOW BATES, *a rather good-sized boy, dressed to make him seem fat and youthful*; TILLIE ROGERS, *a girl of about the same age as BARLOW*; MRS. ROGERS, *an energetic housewife*.

SCENE: *The living room in the ROGERS home. TILLIE sits reading.*

(*Enter MRS. ROGERS.*)

MRS. ROGERS. Tillie, what are you doing?

TILLIE (*indifferently*). Milking cows.

MRS. ROGERS (*amazed*). You are not! You're reading another one of them silly stories; that's what you're doing. Milking cows! The idea!

TILLIE. Well, what'd you ask me for, when you knew?

MRS. ROGERS (*looking off*). Dear me, here comes that silly, fat Barlow Bates. I wonder what he wants?

TILLIE (*with dignity*). You needn't call Barlow silly. He's a nice boy. He's one of my—admirers.

MRS. ROGERS. Admirers—fiddlesticks! Don't talk such foolishness. (*Goes over to side.*) Come in, Barlow. How are you today?

(BARLOW *enters, stands grinning shyly at TILLIE.*)

TILLIE (*with ceremony*). Won't you have a chair?

BARLOW (*embarrassed*). I—yes, ma'am,—no, ma'am, I guess I can't sit down.

MRS. ROGERS. Is there something you want?

BARLOW. Could you—could you lend me a pound of salyratus?

MRS. ROGERS. A POUND! What does she want of all that soda?

BARLOW. I—er—mean a—a—cupful.

MRS. ROGERS. What's she going to do with it?

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BARLOW. Oh, I—er—I—guess—make a puddin'.

MRS. ROGERS. Huh! Must be a funny pudding that takes a cup of soda. Well, I'll go get it for you. (*She goes off.*)

BARLOW. Say, Tillie, say, I—I—you know 'bout it, don't you?

TILLIE. There's a lot of things I know 'bout. Which you mean?

BARLOW. That Jim Crooker is goin' to have a party.

TILLIE. Sure. I'm goin'. I'm goin' to wear a new dress.

BARLOW (*disappointed*). Aw, shucks, that's too bad.

TILLIE (*importantly*). Well, I think it's fine.

BARLOW. But when you're dressed up I'll bet you won't want to eat supper with me, to the party.

TILLIE (*coquettishly*). Well, maybe—I will. I'll see.

(*Enter MRS. ROGERS, carrying a large cup.*)

MRS. ROGERS. Here 'tis, Barlow. Wait, I'll put a paper over it. Now don't you stumble and spill it. (*She is putting paper over cup.*) Look where you're going. This ought to make a pudding for all the folks at a Fourth of July celebration. (*Gives BARLOW the cup.*)

BARLOW. Yes, ma'am. Thank you. (*Grins at TILLIE on sly.*) Ma'll be 'bliged. (*He stands awkwardly.*)

MRS. ROGERS (*briskly*). Well, you better run 'long with it so's your ma can have it.

BARLOW. Yes, ma'am—I—yes, ma'am. (*Grins at TILLIE and goes off.*)

MRS. ROGERS. A cup of saleratus! I don't believe he knows what he's talkin' 'bout. The big lummoX!

TILLIE (*with spirit*). Shame on you to talk 'bout Barlow that way.

MRS. ROGERS (*looking off*). Forever more! Here he comes back again. (*She goes over and admits him.*) Hope you didn't spill it.

(*Re-enter BARLOW.*)

BARLOW. Yes, ma'am, I—mean, no, ma'am. I ain't spilled it, but it wasn't salyratus that ma wants. Can I borry her some—some—a cup of—tea?

MRS. ROGERS. Cup of—tea? Good sakes, your ma's got tea—she bought a pound the other day when I was in the store.

BARLOW. Well, it's—I guess the rats ate it.

MRS. ROGERS. I didn't know rats ever ate tea.

TILLIE. Why don't you go get him some tea, ma? You've got a lot.

MRS. ROGERS. This is funny. (*She takes cup from BARLOW and goes off.*)

BARLOW (*eagerly*). Say, Tillie,—say—I—I—want to tell you—to ask you—say, why can't you lemme bring you from—from the party?

TILLIE. Maybe Bud Elkins will wanta bring me.

BARLOW. Aw, that Bud Elkins—he's a sap—he's a giraffee, aw, he's a—a rhine-osserr-rus. Lemme bring you, Tillie.

TILLIE. Well, I—guess—maybe—I will. (*Smiles at him.*)

BARLOW. Say, that's grand. Don't you fergit.

(*Enter MRS. ROGERS.*)

MRS. ROGERS. Look here, Barlow, what do you mean by this? Your mother tells me she never sent you here for soda or tea, either one. I telephoned to her.

BARLOW (*embarrassed*). Aw, that's jes' like ma, tellin' things like that on me. (*Happily.*) Well, it's all right, anyway.

MRS. ROGERS. I don't think it's all right for you to tell such fibs. It's wrong. Why did you do it?

BARLOW. Well, you see, I—I—had to see Tillie. I had to ask her something.

TILLIE (*proudly*). I think it was fine for him to think up a way to get to talk to me. I think he's smart.

MRS. ROGERS. Cats and fiddlesticks! Well, your ma said for you to come right home.

TILLIE (*anxiously*). I hope she won't scold you.

BARLOW (*bravely*). Aw, that'll be all right.

MRS. ROGERS. She ought to whip you.

BARLOW (*happily*). Well, that'll be all right. (*Aside to TILLIE.*) Now you be sure an' remember.

MRS. ROGERS. You better go. Your ma wants you.

BARLOW. Yes, ma'am, thank you, good-by. (*Goes off, looking back to smile at TILLIE as curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN.

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